Raising of Kashmir issue by Pakistan in UNHRC meeting

5470. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistan again raised the issue of alleged violation of Human Rights in Kashmir in the UN Human Rights Commission in February this year;

(b) if so, in what precise terms and the facts and figures brought home by the Pak-delegation; and

(c) what was the Indian delegation's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) to (c) Pakistan raised the issue of Kashmir in the 51st sessionn of the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNHRC) held in Geneva from January 31, 1995 to March 10, 1995, under several agenda items. The Indian delegation effectively rebutted Pakistani allegations and placed facts in their correct perspective highlighting Pakistan's sponsoring of terrorism across the Line of Control in Jammu & Kashmir. Effective lobbying by Indian delegation ensured that Pakistan could not muster support for tabling a resolution against India.

Indo-Pak talks

5471. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have seen a news-item published in the 'Hindustan Times' dated April 14, 1995, captioned "Fallout of Benazir's US visit: India hopeful of dialogue with Pak"; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto and the detailed facts thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government have consistently stated that Simla Agreement provides the appropriate framework for resolving all differences with Pakistan peacefully and through bilateral negotiations. Accordingly, we are ready for a comprehensive and meaningful dialogue with Pakistan. We hope Pakistan will adopt a positive approach and enter into talks. We will continue to make every effort to work towards good neighbourly relations with Pakistan.

Land route between India and China via Myanmar

5472. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to open land route to China via Myanmar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when such route would be operational; and

(d) what is the present status of the silk route between India and China?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) to (d) Government are aware of informal suggestions made by scholars and others to open a land route between India and China via Myanmar. Government have not received any such proposal so far from the Government of China or Myanmar.

Reduction in visa fees

5473. SHRI YEERA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would consider reducing visa fees for applicants at our Embassies abroad;

(b) whether it is a fact that consular charges between the countries are mutually decided;